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UNCLAS DJIBOUTI 000477

SIPDIS

STATE PLEASE PASS TO DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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SUBJECT: DJI-PHARMA, DJIBOUTI'S PHARMACEUTICAL FACTORY

1. (U) Summary: President Guelleh recently inaugurated Dji-Pharma, a government owned pharmaceutical plant. Dji-Pharma, engineered by the French firm "Ingenerie Pharmaceutique Modulaire," plans to fulfill all the needs of the country in the four mostly used intravenous perfusions in Djibouti hospitals. Djibouti's investment in the project totals USD 4.237 million. End Summary.

2. (U) Members of diplomatic missions, the business community, representatives of international organizations, high government officials and representatives of the U.S. and French military were invited to the inauguration of Djibouti's first government-owned pharmaceutical plant. The "Organisme de Protection Sociale" (OPS), a governmental agency providing retirement, medical services, family allowances and care for injured employees, will operate Dji-Pharma. The Director of OPS explained that his institution was charged by the government to put in place a local production unit of intravenous products. By 2002 contacts were made with the French firm "Ing ьерie Pharmaceutique Modulaire" (IPM), a subsidiary of ROMACO Group followed by an OPS investment of DF Million 750 (US Million 4.237) towards the project. IPM assembled and tested the plant in France before sending it to Djibouti where it is housed in a building located at the Port Free Zone. IPM also trained two pharmacists and two technicians to run the laboratory. An additional twenty people will assist these four senior employees. A total of 10 persons will be dedicated to the production unit. Experts from ROMACO will train Dji-Pharma staff on the job for one month. Quality control will be monitored by ROMACO for the first month of production, after which the Djiboutian experts will take over. ROMACO, will however make regular subsequent visits to Djibouti to validate the production.

3. (U) At the initial stage, four products will be manufactured: intravenous Sodium Chloride 0.9%, Glucose 5%, Glucose 10% and Ringer Lactate. All these products are made in accordance with both European and U.S. pharmaceutical standards. The products are contained in small and flexible bags of 500 ml, which make them easy for transportation and handling. Up to twenty products, including generic drugs, are expected to be manufactured at a later stage. During the first year of operation, Dji-Pharma will produce 750,000 bags to supply local needs (around 500,000) and sell the remaining products in sub-regional or COMESA markets. The majority of intravenous products are currently imported from France. The cost of Dji-Pharma products reportedly will average the current cost of intravenous products in Djibouti but be of the highest quality.

4. (U) In his speech inaugurating the plant, President Guelleh stressed the importance of taking good care of the new equipment. He added that the OPS made an excellent choice in selecting these initial products because they were very critical for emergency care. He continued by saying that Dji-Pharma was a big step in giving autonomy to Djiboutian health care in its need for pharmaceutical products. In his turn, the Minister of Labor, who controls OPS, went further by saying that Dji-Pharma was in line with the President's program of self-sufficiency. The Minister reiterated that OPS paid for the full investment with no foreign assistance. All the raw products are ready and the IPM technicians are making last preparations for Dji-Pharma to start production in a couple of months.

RAGSDALE